

Almost 50 years later, Sylvia's has become the landmark of 126th St. and Lenox Avenue and the one place where everyone knows they can get a taste of authentic Southern Soul food. The restaurant also serves to remind the community's residents that hard work, determination, and love of family can lead to success.

Sylvia's Restaurant, a Harlem soul-food landmark, attracts busloads of tourists from all over the United States and around the world. Sylvia's is a frequent stop for celebrities and politicians. With the launch of a line of prepared supermarket foods, the empire of restaurateur Sylvia Woods has expanded to touch the culinary lives of people all over the country.

Woods herself has a remarkable story that encapsulates much of 20th-century African-American history. She was born Sylvia Pressley in Hemingway, South Carolina, on February 2, 1926. Her father, Van Pressley, died three days after she was born from the after effects of chemical-weapons injuries he sustained while fighting in World War I. When she was three her mother departed for New York City in search of a chance to make money that would put her family on a solid financial footing.

Woods recalled with affection the warmth and closeness of her rural southern community. Nevertheless, she has painful memories. "I didn't like any part of farm life," she told Nation's Restaurant News. "I didn't understand why people would not let me drink out of the same water fountain, but they would trust me to cook for them and to take care of their dearest things, their babies." Her grandfather was hanged after being wrongly accused of participating in a grocery-store robbery when her mother was just an infant.

Sylvia Woods worked in a Queens hat factory for a time, as well, but a turning point came in 1954 when a cousin told Woods that she planned to quit her job at a lunch counter at 126th Street and Lenox Avenue, around the corner from the famed Apollo Theater and within walking distance of the Woods's 131st Street apartment. Woods, who had rarely even seen the inside of a restaurant, took the job with trepidation and without any thought of ever running one herself. But she impressed the owner, a fellow South Carolinian, with her energy. When he ran into financial trouble with an investment in a black resort in upstate New York, he offered to sell her the restaurant. After her mother took out a \$20,000 loan backed by her family farm, Sylvia Woods became the owner of Johnson's Luncheonette in 1962.

With four children, Van, Bedelia, Kenneth, and Crizette, born between 1949 and 1967, Woods had little time to think of expansion, but Sylvia's became known far and wide for its fried chicken, collard greens, peach pies, and other soul-food standards. The restaurant moved two doors down from its original location in 1968 and gradually grew to occupy most of the Harlem block on which it rests. Sylvia's now can seat 450 and boasts a next-door catering operation.

Diners suggested that Sylvia's open new branches in other cities, but Woods and her son, Van, decided on a different course—one inspired by the customers who would come in at holiday time with empty jars and ask whether they could buy Sylvia's barbecue sauce.

Launched in 1992 and featuring a picture of Woods herself on the label, the Sylvia's

Queen of Soul Food line of canned and bottled foods impressed Pathmark supermarket CEO Jim Donald. He told Crain's New York Business that "Sylvia and Van Woods run their company with their heart and soul." Sylvia's hot sauces, candied yams, mustard greens, kidney beans, and 13 other items are available in supermarkets nationwide.

Sylvia's Soul Food cookbook was also published in 1992. It was followed in 1999 by the more extensive Sylvia's Family Soul Food Cookbook, which included Woods's personal reminiscences and numerous family photographs along with recipes gathered in a giant South Carolina family cook-off.

The good reputation of the "Sylvia's" name has put Sylvia Woods's cookery on a path to growth, with the restaurant's many admirers hoping to get in on the action. Additional full-service restaurants are planned for the future, increasing the Sylvia's stable of 200 employees and bringing the soul-food creations of Hemingway, South Carolina, to even more American diners. With all four Woods children involved with the business, it represents a family tradition of the best—and tastiest—kind.

Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring South Carolina's own, mother, restaurateur and enterprising businesswoman, Mrs. Sylvia Woods.

#### CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1585, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOE BACA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 12, 2007*

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 1585, the Conference Report on Defense Authorization Bill.

As we approach the Holiday Season and we go back to our families, we cannot forget that not everyone is so fortunate.

Our loyal soldiers are serving proudly and not all will be with their loved ones.

I want to speak directly to them and to their families in my District because these are the true faces of the war.

This bill supports our service members by increasing military pay across the board, because the empty stomachs of a family hurt no matter where you are.

This bill protects our soldiers by providing the equipment needed, because today—our soldiers deserve the best there is.

This bill includes the Wounded Warrior Act which reinforces the fact that the tragic conditions at Walter Reed must end.

I ask my colleagues to not ignore the realities of the war and review their priorities—we must give our troops on the frontline what they need and rightfully deserve.

#### VETERANS GUARANTEED BONUS ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOHN D. DINGELL**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, December 17, 2007*

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3793, the Veterans Guarante-

teed Bonus Act of 2007. I am proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation because I believe the men and women who bravely serve our country deserve everything they are promised when they sign up for the military. This bill ensures those forced to leave military service because of a combat injury will receive the bonuses they are entitled to. Moreover, this bill recognizes that the men and women injured in battle, in Iraq and Afghanistan, would much rather be with their brothers and sisters in the field than in a hospital nursing their wounds. The least we can do is afford them with the benefits, pay, and assistance to which they are already entitled.

I would like to thank Congressman ALTMIRE for his tireless work on this legislation. It is a fine example of how the Democratic Congress is keeping its promises to our dedicated men and women valiantly fighting on behalf of our country. I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the Veterans Guaranteed Bonus Act.

#### RECOGNIZING LINDA KITAZAKI

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 18, 2007*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, heroes are people who devote their lives to serving others and making our world a better place in which to live. Linda Kitazaki was one of those people.

Linda was the executive director of Mothers Against Drunk Driving Southeast Texas. I knew her for over 20 years in my work as a judge in Texas. She was an advocate in every sense of the word who worked passionately to fulfill MADD's vision to stop drunk driving, support the victims of this violent crime and prevent underage drinking. Those who know her best describe her as compassionate, powerful, gracious and inspirational.

Linda became affiliated with MADD back in 1988 because of a near fatal crash involving teenagers who were drinking and driving. The situation was especially troublesome to Linda because the teenagers had been given alcohol by a parent. Because of her dedication to making a difference, she became the Administrator for the Harris County Chapter of MADD.

With the assistance of Penny Ellsworth, who joined MADD because her son was killed by a drunk driver, the two reorganized the Harris County Chapter.

MADD Harris County became the Southeast Texas Region Affiliate Office. With Linda at the helm, the small office grew to serve 10 counties and became one of the most prominent within the organization. Not only does the office provide services to the victims of drunk drivers, it also conducts outreach and education in order to prevent future tragedies. The idea of preventing young people from making bad decisions that would impact them for the rest of their lives truly resonated with Linda.

As a result of Linda's leadership, her MADD office became very strong and has 10 staff members and countless volunteers. She started new programs and initiatives. She was considered a maverick in new fundraising methods in the Houston area which were then replicated for national success in the organization. Her passion and commitment won her Employee of the Year recognition.

She also played a key role in developing the Take the Wheel Program, which focused all of the organization's resources and programs into Harris County because it had the highest number of drunk driving deaths in Texas. By partnering with law enforcement, businesses, government, community and religious leaders, the program seeks to save lives by encouraging personal responsibility in the use of alcohol and educating the public about the dangers of drunk driving.

On Dec. 13, 2007, Linda passed away unexpectedly. She leaves behind a legacy of compassion and exceptional service. On Dec. 19, 2007, friends and family will gather to celebrate the remarkable life of this extraordinary community servant. The State of Texas and our Nation owes much to Linda Kitazaki for making our streets and highways safer.

And that's just the way it is.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 18, 2007*

Ms. DeLAURO. Madam Speaker, due to medical reasons I missed a suspension vote and the vote on the motion to postpone consideration of the veto message for the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall No. 1154 and "aye" on rollcall No. 1155.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 18, 2007*

Mr. ORTIZ. Madam Speaker, due to personal medical reasons, I was unable to vote during the following roll call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted as indicated below.

Rollcall No. 1163: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1164: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1165: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1166: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1167: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1168: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1169: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1170: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1171: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1172: "yea."  
Rollcall No. 1173: "yea."

#### ALL ALONG HIS WATCHTOWER

### HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 18, 2007*

Mr. SHULER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to present the following poem entitled All Along His Watchtower, which was written by Mr. Albert Carey Caswell in honor of Brent Hendricks, of the 172nd Striker Brigade from Forest City, North Carolina. Mr. Hendricks lost his leg when an IED blew up his humvee.

Bump, bump bump bump bump . . .  
Bump, bump bump bump bump . . . bump,  
bump bump bump bump . . .  
Whether, upon football fields of green . . . or  
on so Heroic Battlefields of Honor Seen . . .

All Along His Watchtower, "They could get  
no relief" . . .

Striking Hard, Striking Fast!

A bold heart, That is his motto, That is his  
path!

Dying twice, when . . . The Dark Riders in  
the distance, they began to approach . . .

When Brent, began to howl . . . "I'm not  
ready now!"

The Nort Catolacki Kid,  
6'9" . . . built for power and speed . . . 9  
sacks in one football game . . . a man  
who would not heed!

Until, on battlefields of horror he would  
bleed . . . In The Real Game of Life, all  
for our Country 'Tis a Thee!

Giving up his fine leg, as he did . . .

Brent Hendrick, an Army Man . . .  
A Real American Hero, who before us now  
stands . . .

Strength In Honor, who respects so com-  
mands . . . cheating death, as towards  
evil he ran . . .

Into that dark valley of death, for our nation  
to so bless . . . Striking Hard, Striking  
fast . . . all in death's path!

But, when you're 6'9" . . . and have a 17½  
shoe . . .

You can kick some glutenous maximus too!  
Now isn't that true! As this patriot's  
heart comes into view!

Could we, would we . . . ever such magnifi-  
cence find so too?

All ready, operations . . . he's had 65!

But, this Heroes Heart . . . will not wilt, will  
not die!

Like Arnold, he'll be back . . . Back . . .  
Back . . . Back in Iraq . . . with his  
brothers in arms . . . or he'll resign!

And The Wind Cries Hero!

Do Do Do Do . . .

I ask my colleagues to join me in expressing our appreciation for this soldier's dedication to the United States Armed Forces and to this Nation. His service and sacrifice is a shining example of the quality of men and women who serve this great Nation at home and abroad.

#### RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTMAS AND THE CHRIS- TIAN FAITH

SPEECH OF

### HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 11, 2007*

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin by thanking the Ranking Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentlewoman from Florida, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for her support and help in getting this important measure to the House floor for a vote.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to address the House today to discuss the importance and relevance of Christmas, the Christian holiday celebrating the birth of our savior Jesus Christ.

As this resolution notes, there are approximately 225 million Christians in the United States, making Christianity the religion of over three-fourths of the American population. Beyond that, there are approximately 2 billion

Christians throughout the world, making Christianity the largest religion in the world and the religion of about one-third of the world population.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, in recent decades there have been some who have undertaken efforts to diminish the significance of this great religion, and these efforts are no more apparent than during this time of Christmas.

It is not hard to look out over this great country of ours and find those who, for one reason or another, have engaged in a highly-politicized and highly-publicized crusade to rid the public square of any reference to the religious underpinnings of the Christmas holiday. These are individuals who have subscribed to a radical interpretation of our Constitution's free exercise and establishment clauses and have sought to impose their secular views and beliefs on the nation as a whole.

In many respects, it is this ongoing effort to bring about the secularization of Christmas—and all of our everyday lives for that matter—that motivated me to bring this resolution before the House today.

Regardless of how others may define it, Mr. Speaker, Christmas is a religious holiday. It is the day on which Christians—those who identify themselves as believers in the salvation from sin offered to them through the death and resurrection of their savior, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and who, out of gratitude for the gift of salvation, commit themselves to living their lives in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Bible—celebrate the birth of their savior. For Christians, the birth of Jesus is cause for great celebration. As the Son of God, Jesus was sent to earth, by our Heavenly Father, to become a human being, live a sinless life, be crucified on a cross for our sins, and rise from the dead three days later. The purpose of this, as you well know, Mr. Speaker, was to save sinners from eternal death—the price to be paid for their sin.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the birth of Christ, as celebrated by Christians on Christmas is a truly important and significant day because it is celebrated as a recognition of God's redemption, mercy and Grace.

The importance of Christmas, however, does not end with the tenets of Christianity. Because Christmas is one of the most important holidays on the Christian calendar, I believe that its annual passage should serve as an opportunity for all Americans, Christian or not, religious or not, to recognize the important role played by Christianity in the formation of our nation and in the founding of our civilization.

It is no coincidence, Mr. Speaker, that court-houses throughout this country proudly display the Ten Commandments. It is no accident that, in this very chamber, it is the face of Moses, the human author of those divinely dictated commandments, that looks down upon you, keeping close watch on all that transpires in this chamber. Mr. Speaker the framework of our laws and the fabric of our society is heavily dependent upon the maxims of Christianity, and I believe that as we Christians begin our annual celebration of the birth of our savior, the one from whom Christianity derives its name, it is wholly appropriate for us, as a nation and as members of this House, to take the time to acknowledge the contributions that the Christian religion has made to our country and our way of life.

Mr. Speaker, I think we all can agree that virtually any American, whether Christian,